



REHEARSING A DAYLIGHT exterior for "Odds Against Tomorrow" is Director Robert Wise extreme left, addressing actor Harry Belafonte in telephone booth. Meanwhile Cinematographer Joseph Brun, ASC, in leather coat, next to Wise, checks his lighting. Note booster light, also wind machine used to produce effect of wind in scene.

IT WOULD NOT BE possible to write about "Odds Against Tomorrow" without starting with the man behind it: Robert Wise, our director. When I say "our," I am sure I am expressing the thoughts of everyone connected with the production, those behind the camera and those in front of it.

Robert Wise never speaks merely for the sake of making conversation. He always means every word he says, and when the word does not come, a simple gesture expressing power and determination completes the sentence. This man breathes, lives, thinks in film terms; his heart beats at film speed. There is greatness in his simplicity and deep knowledge in his modesty. In brief, sheer enjoyment and inspiration for the director of photography.

Thus, when Robert Wise said to me: "I want an atmosphere of increasing menace and a climax of catastrophe; we shall ignore the rules and regulations of conventional visualization," I knew these words were not just another pre-production speech.

Basically, "Odds Against Tomorrow," a Harbel Production for United Artists, is the story of a bank robbery and of the motives leading three extremely different individuals (Robert Ryan, Harry Belafonte, Ed Bagley) to associate in such an enterprise. It is also the story of the hatred between a Southerner and a Negro, a hatred which leads them in an implacable crescendo to pitiful failure and death. It is a hatred without concessions, solution, or sweet appeasement.

The possibilities of "photographic contribution" are plentiful with such a subject. However, my constant pre-occupation was to integrate the photography with Robert Wise's powerful way of telling a film story while avoiding obvious and facile acrobatics.

We used wide-angle lenses exclusively throughout the picture: 30mm, 25mm, 18mm, and quite often the 14mm made by Angenieux of France. Most closeups were shot with the 30mm or 25mm, and occasionally with the 18mm. Foreshortening was used as a dramatic element. The 14mm was used for its truly amazing characteristics: not merely for its great depth of field and extremely wide angle, but especially for its presence and participation, and its wonderful rendition of architectural perspective. We used the zoom lens quite often, not as an instrument to obtain magnification or to approximate traveling shots, but as an editorial medium corresponding to a progressive fast or slow switch of image format, or as a rhythmic element in combination with sound and dialogue.

One-third of the picture was shot on location in the streets of a small town (Hudson, New York) by bitter, cold night. All studio shots as well as interior locations included apparent ceilings, thus multiplying the lighting difficulties. In one interior scene the camera was on the studio floor. Sol Midwall, my operative cameraman, had to make a 180° vertical pan following Robert Ryan as he moves along a narrow corridor, through a living room, then to a bedroom. Walls and ceilings so enclosed the

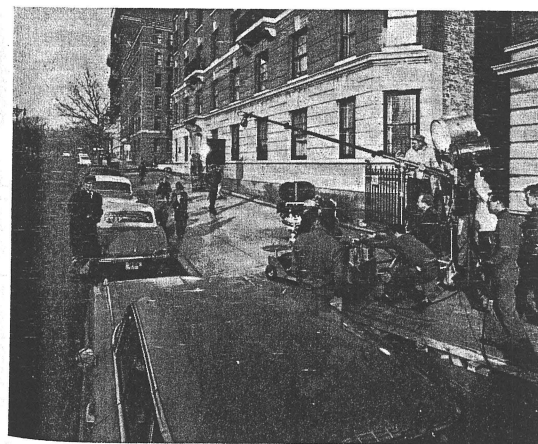
"An atmosphere of increasing menace and a climax of catastrophe"—filming formula for

## 'ODDS AGAINST TOMORROW'

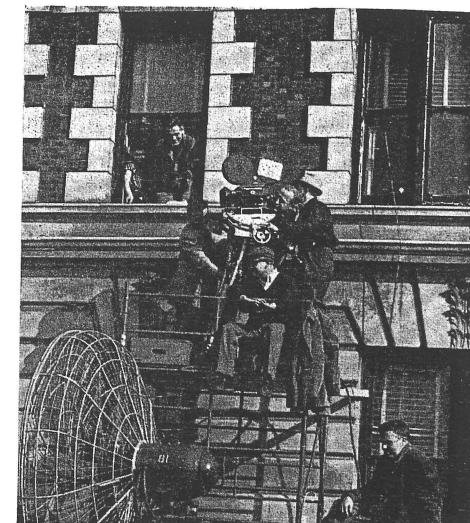
By JOSEPH BRUN, A.S.C.

sets there was literally no room for any lights on the floor or on the catwalks. To overcome this problem, I decided to use a mobile microphone boom, temporarily inactive, to mount and move my lights in concert with the action and panning of the camera. Small spotlights were mounted on the mike booms which were extended out into the set. As the camera was panned, electricians moved the boom-mounted lights out of camera range but without altering their effectiveness as the source of illumination. It was an amusing and new kind of show in the studio.

The most challenging part of the assignment, perhaps, was an important exterior sequence which, in the story, was to start at 4:30 p.m. in full daylight and continue into full night, with continuous action on the part of the three principal actors. Director Wise, who rarely uses dissolves for editorial transitions, wanted continuous photographic progression over the whole sequence without resorting to dissolves. Extremely careful planning and a long



FILMING A DOLLY SHOT on location. Cinematographer Brun's camera crew uses a solid platform dolly "track" here for moving the camera trained on Belafonte, extreme left. Here may be seen the two fill lights (back of mike boom) which provide balancing illumination, while another booster light is set up on sidewalk in distance, properly goboed to shield light from camera lens.



CINEMATOGRAPHER Brun, with eye to finder, checks a camera setup for "Odds Against Tomorrow" from a parallel erected on a location site. Huge blower is set up near by to produce the required wintry winds for the scene. Wide-angle lenses were used exclusively for photographing the picture.

streak of bad weather enabled us to achieve this interesting sequence. As a result audiences will actually witness the end of a day and the birth of a night in its full progression.

Matching from scene to scene obviously would be the problem here. Shooting required jumping from one location to another, abandoning a well-commenced sequence or an interior set simply in order to hit the right luminosity of a sky or a cloud formation. Filters were used in all possible combinations and I was greatly helped by the variety of film emulsions which are put at the disposal of cameramen nowadays. We jumped from Background-X, to Plus-X, or Tri-X, and used a large quantity of infra-red film. The make-up men changed the make-up of the principal actors several times a day to accommodate the change from panchromatic emulsions to infra-red.

The final chase-to-the-death sequence of the picture was shot at night at an oil refinery, on the tops of full gas tanks. During the cold nights, the men had to take extraordinary precautions to observe the strict safety regulations as well as to preserve their own lives. The final fight between Robert Ryan and Harry Belafonte was staged on top of a tank 40-feet high. Illumination could only be obtained from the ground below or from far-distant points. We had worked for four long nights on this sequence and this was to be the last one, as well as the last scene on this frightening location. Then, right behind the rehearsing actors, the sky began to lighten portending daybreak. It then became a race between men and the rising sun. I had mentioned to the crew that no filters or optical tricks could enable us to match the deep, jet-black night effect estab-

Continued on Page 510

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## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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*Answer:* To take a reading of a back-lighted subject with the Norwood meter, the meter should be used in the normal manner—that is, at the position of the subject, and with the heliosphere light-collector aimed at the camera lens.

As a back-light illuminates only a portion of the camera-side of the subject, it will illuminate the same percentage of the heliosphere, which represents the camera-side of the subject, and thus the meter will precisely indicate the correct exposure.—Don Norwood, A.S.C. Associate.

## SIMULTANEOUS SWITCHING

Continued from Page 488

Faced with this problem on many assignments, I have devised a simple method for automatically eliminating distraction at the moment when I am most occupied with camera settings and an evasive subject.

Two methods have proven feasible, dependent on the make of camera and the application. My so-called "direct method" is to mount a momentary press switch, such as a micro-switch, on the camera in such a manner that the flexible contact arm of the switch is located in the field of movement of the camera filming button. When this is impractical, a hinged lever activates the micro-switch simultaneously with, or just prior to depressing the camera release button, as shown in Fig. 6.

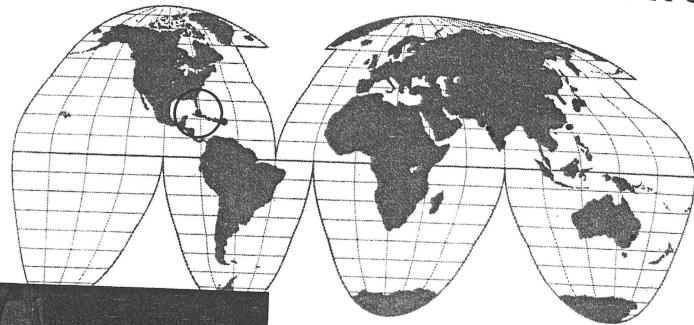
The switching method described and illustrated here can be adapted to most of the motion picture cameras now being used by roving cameramen, TV newsreel photographers, etc. ■

## "ODDS AGAINST TOMORROW"

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lished previously for this sequence. . . so we would have to come back the following night to wind up the sequence if we didn't get it now. We made it, however, and when we announced "Print it!" dawn was breaking, and the task ended amid shouts of joy from the men. ■

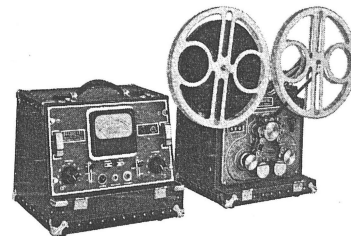
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Eldorado Pictures Corp. of Cuba, with main studios in Havana, is completely equipped with Magnasync-Magnaphonic sound systems. Photo at left, taken at the Biltmore Studio, Havana, shows the sound Supervisor, Charles Stapler, demonstrating recording techniques to Teresita, Cuban actress; Wm. Stutz and D. J. White, Magnasync executives; Al Stetson, grip; Charles Maguire, production manager, and C. B. Newbery, producer of "Kiss Her Goodbye", the feature now in production.

Inset photo shows Stapler and three "barbudos" (the bearded ones) . . . part of the Biltmore Studio's armed guard which is still necessary in post-revolution Cuba.



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